

Comparing Health Status in Australian Population Groups

TODAYS LESSON

Title:

- To develop an understanding of the differences in health status in the different population groups.

Success Criteria:

- I understand the differences in the health status of the different Australian adult population groups
- I can name the factors that contribute to this difference.

Although the health status of Australians is considered to be very good, there are some population groups and determinants that have an impact on the country's health.

Can you think of any population groups that may have a lower health status?

Indigenous Population

(Roughly 2.5 % of the population)

- Improving indigenous health is a priority of the Australian government.
- Life expectancy rates of indigenous adults are at least 17 years below the expectancy of other Australians.
- 70 % of indigenous Australians are dying before the age of 65.

Leading causes of death are:

- Cardiovascular disease
- Diabetes
- Cancer
- Chronic respiratory disease
- Injury and
- Mental illness.

Factors contributing to the difference include:

- Higher smoking rates
- Increased alcohol and substance abuse
- Reduced access to high quality food supplies and health services
- Poorer housing facilities and
- Lower levels of employment and education.

Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Australians

- The mortality rate for socioeconomically disadvantaged Australians is 80% higher than other Australian adults.
- Socioeconomic factors include income, level of education, housing, employment status and occupation.

Leading health concerns are:

- Diabetes
- cardiovascular disease
- lung cancer
- mental health issues
- asthma and
- premature mortality.

Socioeconomic disadvantage is associated with increased contributing factors including:

- increased smoking and alcohol consumption
- being overweight or obese
- consuming a poor diet
- physical inactivity
- and having reduced access to health services and health knowledge.

Living in Rural & Remote Areas

(32% of the population- 29% in rural areas & 3% in remote)

- Health of Australians in rural and remote areas is much worse than those living in urban areas.
- In 2004-2005 , the government committed \$830 million to support and improve health services including increasing the number of medical professionals in these areas.

Leading health concerns are:

- cancer (particularly skin)
- coronary heart disease
- Depression
- Diabetes
- stroke and injury.

Contributing factors include:

- less access to primary health care services
- increased risk of injury and higher risk jobs
- longer transport times
- increased related costs
- high smoking
- alcohol consumption rates
- reduced access to fresh food.

People Born Overseas

(Estimated 24% of Australia's population)

- Research has shown that migrants enjoy good health, if not better health compared to Australian born adults.
- However certain risk factors and health conditions are more common for this population group

Leading health concerns are:

- Diabetes
- lung cancer
- Pneumonia
- heart disease
- colorectal cancer.

Contributing factors include:

- language barriers limiting access to health services
- food consumption (food previously eaten may not be available, so consuming alternative foods that may be high in sugar or fat).